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ABSTRACT

An examination of data pertaining to the participation of adult residents of New York in the Adult Literacy Education Program during 1981-82 revealed that many of the 85,400 adults served by the program moved from being illiterate and unemployed or on welfare to being employed and independent of public assistance. The majority of those participating in the program were female Caucasians between the ages of 16 and 24 who had attained a 5.0 to an 8.9 grade education. Among those participating in the program, 10,870 received high school equivalency diplomas, 1,791 went on to postsecondary education, and 6,195 went on to further educational training. With respect to social development, 512 became United States citizens and 1,584 registered to vote for the first time. Of those completing the program, 21 percent (7,549 students) upgraded their jobs or received a salary increase. In all, 4,567 program participants found jobs. Analysis of the actual tax dollars spent on the program as opposed to the tax dollars realized because of the increased earnings of the program participants indicated that the program resulted in a net gain of $5,781,044. At present, approximately 20,450 adults are waiting to enter an adult literacy program in the state of New York. (MN)

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Adult Literacy Education Program New York State

Participant Data 1981~1982

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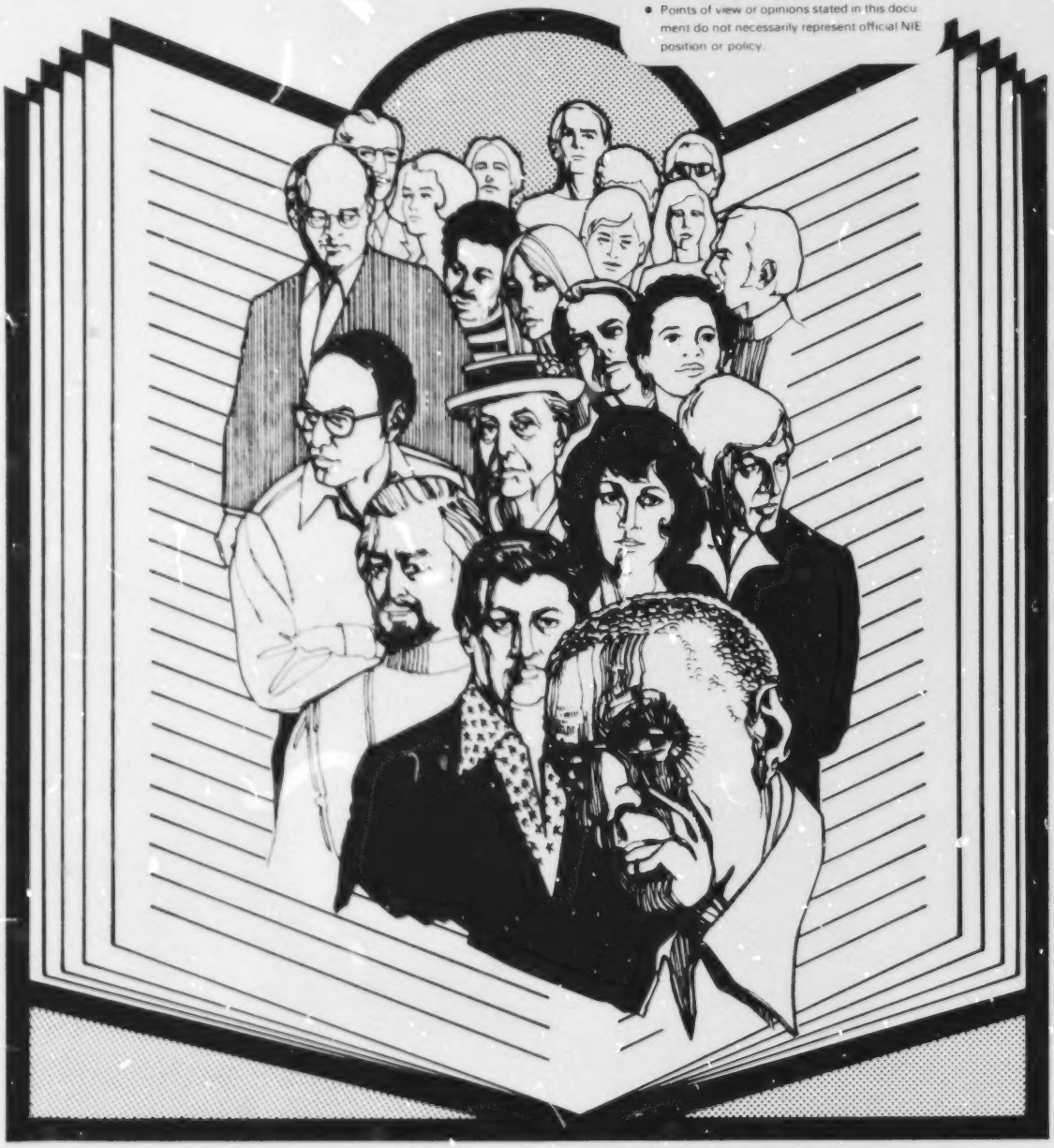

The University of the State of New York / THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Bureau of Curriculum Development and Division of Continuing Education
Albany, New York 12234

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1983

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Foreword and Acknowledgments

This report of the 1981-82 Literacy Program provides an overview of one of the most essential services offered to the 4 million undereducated adults in New York State. It is a well known fact that illiteracy contributes to rising welfare costs, unemployment, low level job stagnation, voter apathy, neglect of the exercise of responsible citizenship and the escalation of criminal activities. (Sixty percent of the inmate population in New York's correctional institutes have less than an eighth grade reading level.) Besides leaving its scars on society as a whole, illiteracy causes untold individuals to suffer through poor self-image, and feelings of inadequacy as a parent, provider, and participant in the democratic process.

Efforts to combat adult illiteracy are carried on by hundreds of adult basic education programs and thousands of literacy volunteers. To them this report is dedicated in the hope that increased interest in who is effected and in what can be done and has been done will continue to be done, but on a scale which will more nearly match the immensity of the problem.

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Literacy Programs Benefit Everyone

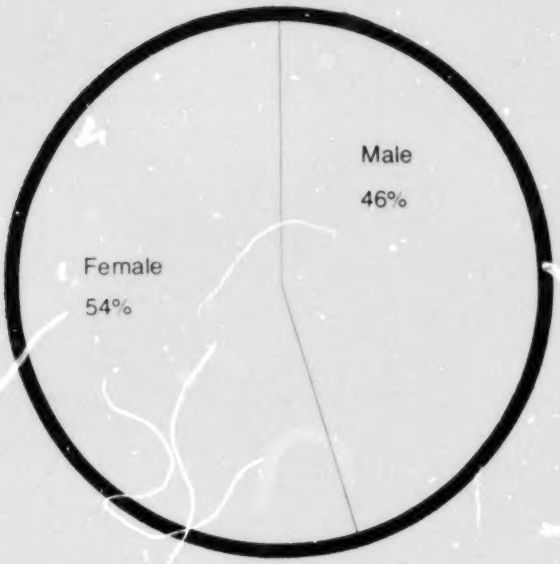
New York State Adults Served

Some 85,400 adults were served in the Adult Literacy Program in 1981–1982. Many moved from being illiterate and unemployed or on welfare to being employed and independent of public assistance.

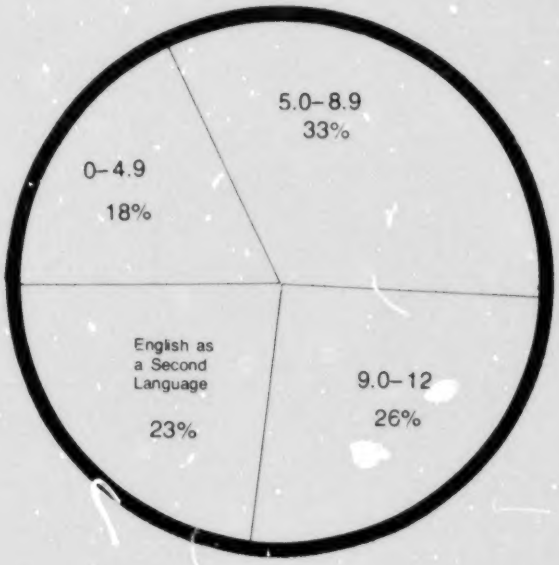
Students' Demographic Profiles at Entry

The students in the Adult Literacy Program may be categorized as follows.

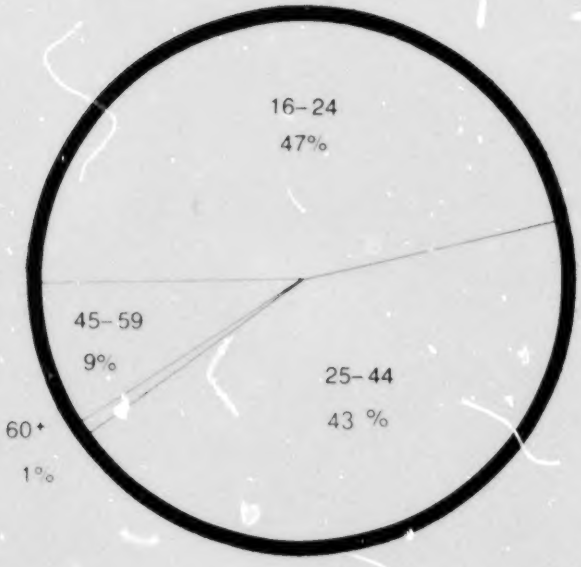
Sex



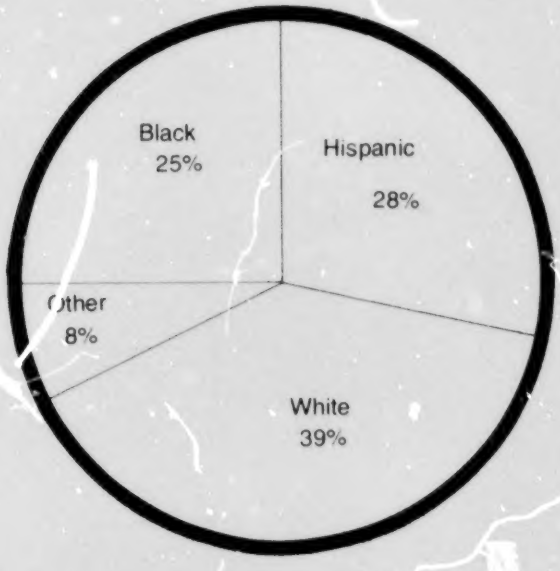
Grade level



Age

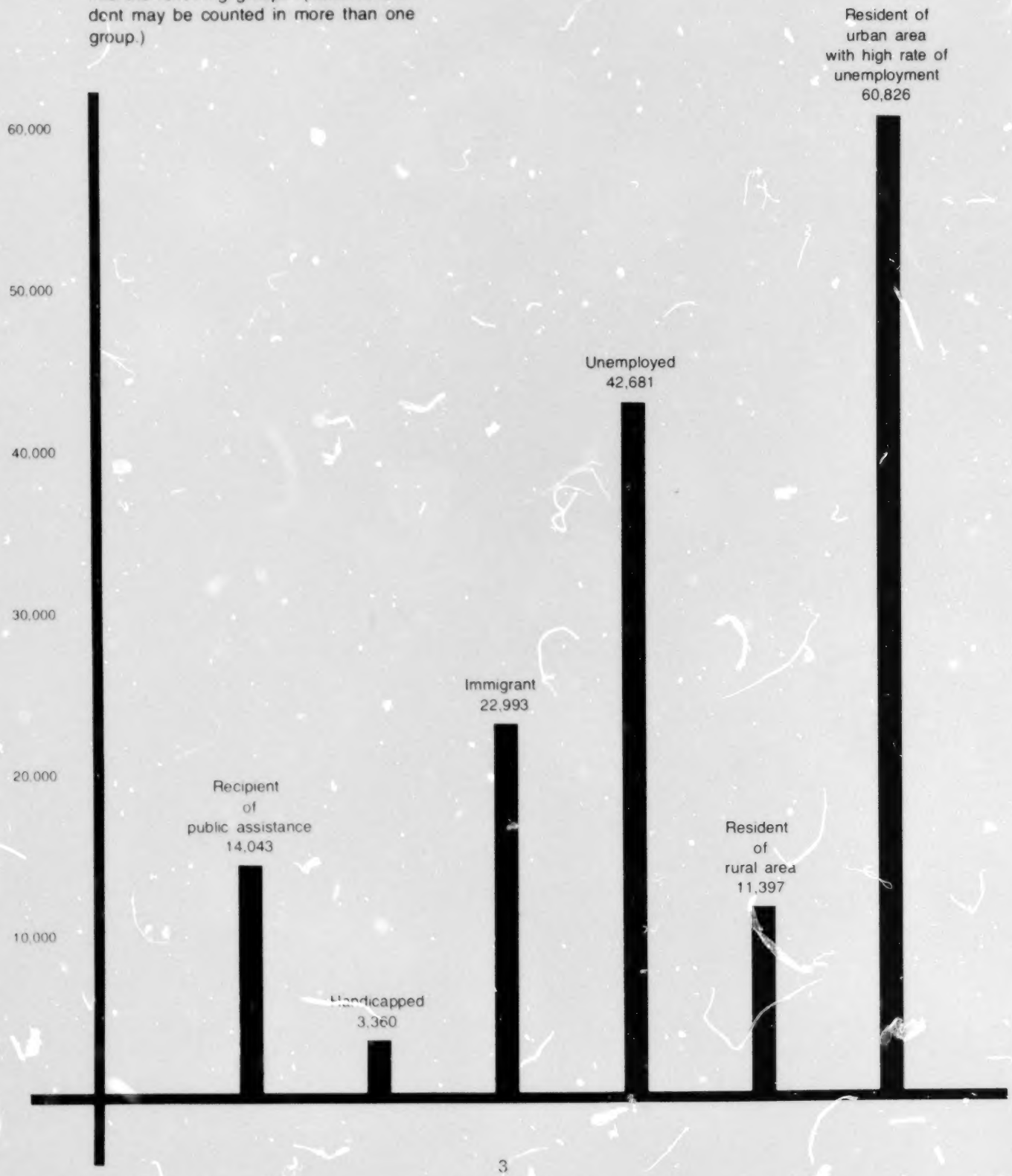


Ethnicity



Students' Social Profiles

The 85,400 students served in the Adult Literacy Program may be broken down into the following groups. (Note: A student may be counted in more than one group.)



Students' Contact Hours

The 85,400 students spent a total of 6,435,327 hours in instruction. These are called "contact hours."
The average contact hours per student were 75 hours, 20 minutes.

Contact Hours and K–12 Comparison

The 6,435,327 contact hours may be broken down as 5,282 years of elementary level education and 2,029 years of high school education or a total of 7,311 years of K–12 schooling for adults.

YEARS OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

During the Year July 1, 1981–June 30, 1982 the New York State Literacy Program Provided:

5,282 Years of Elementary Education Instruction and 2,029 Years of High School Instruction for a total of 7,311 YEARS OF SCHOOLING FOR ADULTS.

RATIONALE:

1. New York State Public Schools for Children and Youth

   Average Elementary School
   182 days × 5.5 hours per day × 92% attendance =
   921 hrs. per year per student

   Average High School
   180 days × 5 hours per day × 86% attendance =
   774 hours per year per student

2. New York State Literacy Program for Adults

   Student Hours of Instruction: 1981–1982

   Grade Level Instruction 0–8 = 4,864,997 Student Instructional Hours

   High School Equivalency Instruction =
   1,570,330 hours Student Instructional hours.

3. New York State Literacy Program for Adults

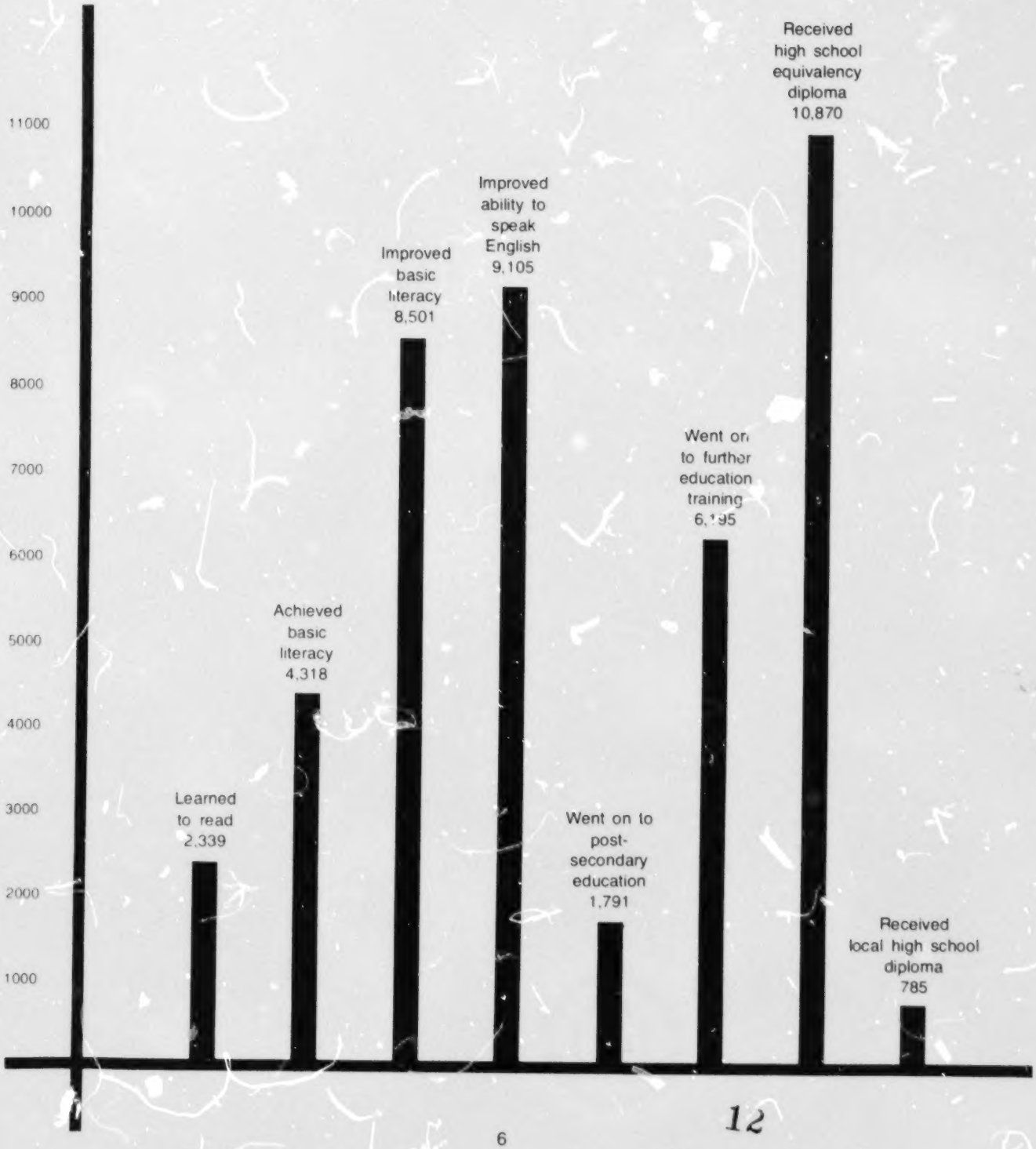
   Student Years of Instruction: 1981–1982

   Grade Level Instruction 0–8: 4,864,997 student hours ÷ 921 = 5,282 Student years

   High School Equivalency Instruction: 1,570,330 Student hours ÷ 774 = 2,029 Student Years

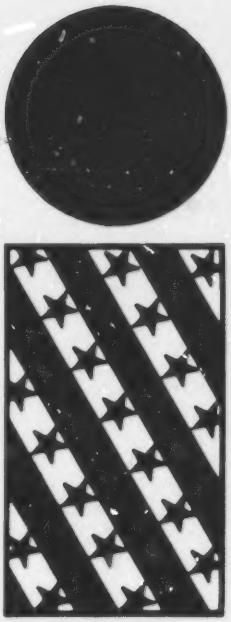
Students' Academic Gains

Students in the Adult Literacy Program realized the following academic goals.

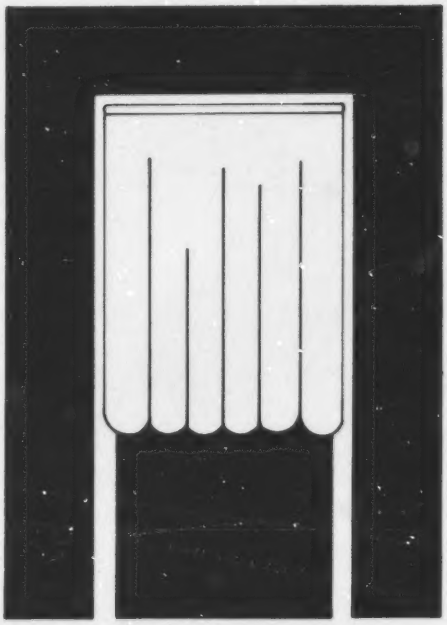


Students' Social Goals

Students in the Adult Literacy Program realized the following social goals.



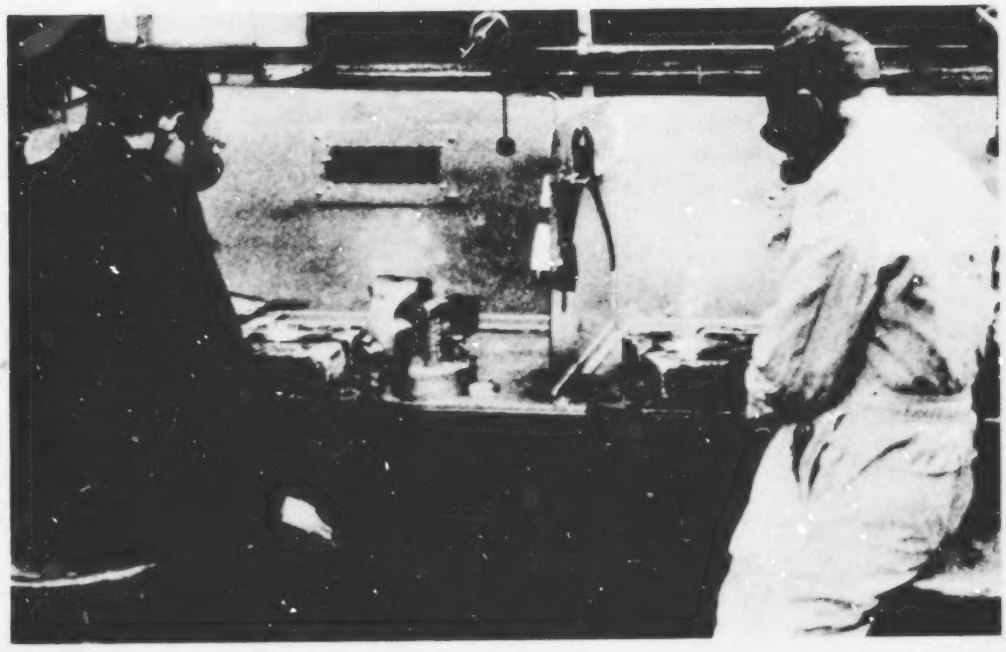
512 became U.S. Citizens.



1,584 registered to vote for the first time.

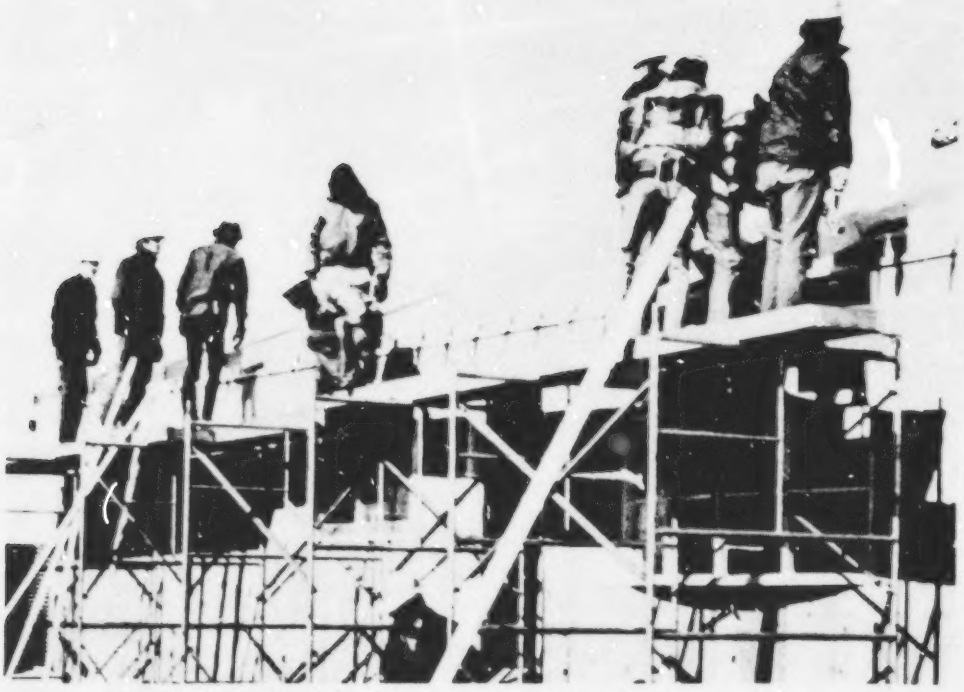
Students' Economic Gains

4,567 of all unemployed students obtained jobs.



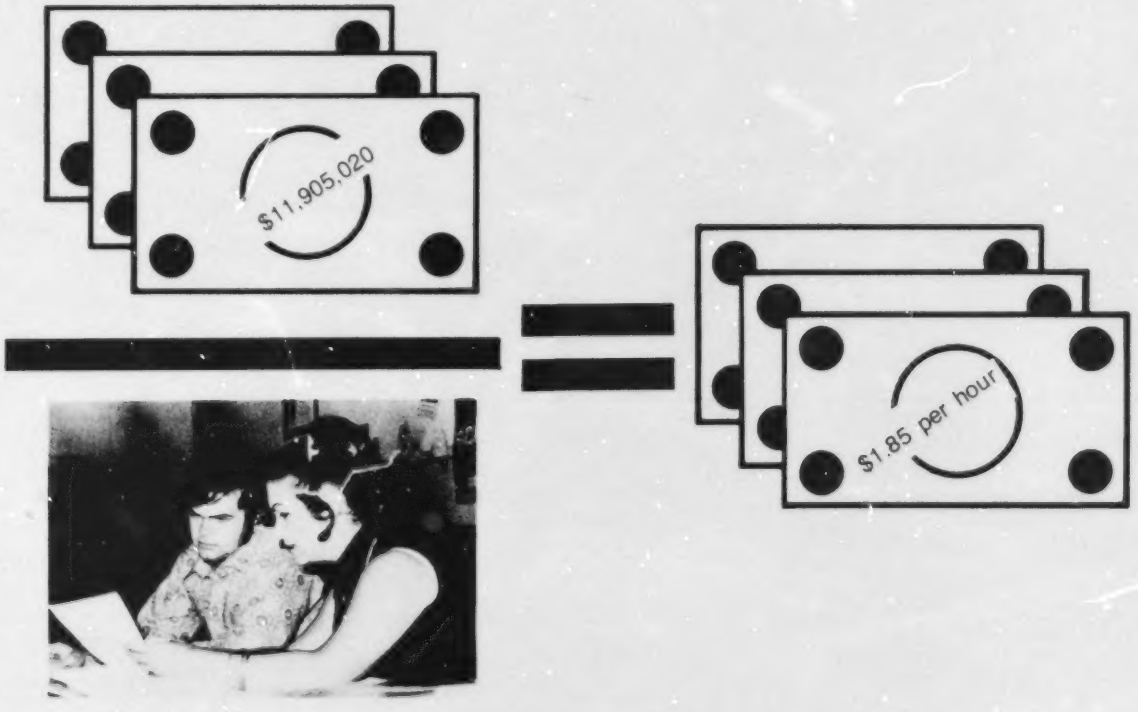
Students Realizing Job Improvements

Twenty one percent of employed students received a job upgrading or salary increase; this is 7,549 out of 35,393.



Cost Per Hour

$11,905,020 was spent on the Adult Literacy Program. Each hour of instruction for each student was made available to students at the low cost of: $1.85 per hour



6,435,327 hours

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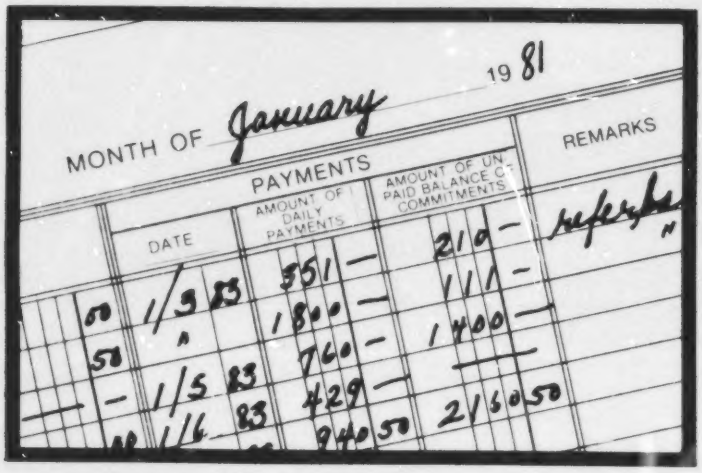
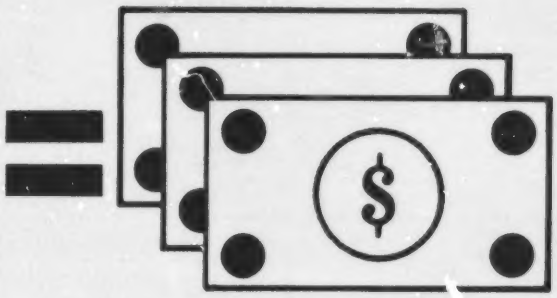
Actual Cost-Effectiveness

Actual Tax Dollars Saved on this Program
$17,686,064

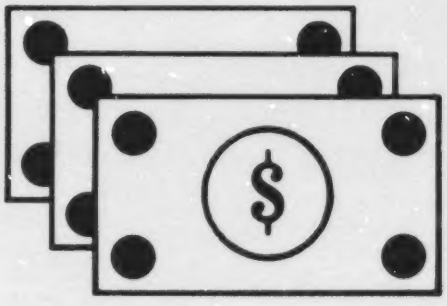
Actual Tax Dollars Spent on this Program
$11,905,020



Net Gain—
$5,781,044

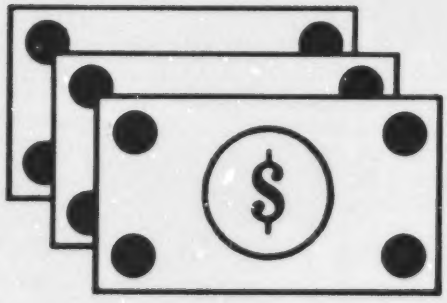


Financial Impact of Program



Average public assistance entitlement	$6,779
Adults removed from public assistance rolls	×1,720
Total amount saved	**$11,659,880**

Average income	$7,000
Adults who became employed	×4,567
Total taxable income	$31,969,000
Taxes generated (at 18%) on $31,969,000 =	**$5,754,420**

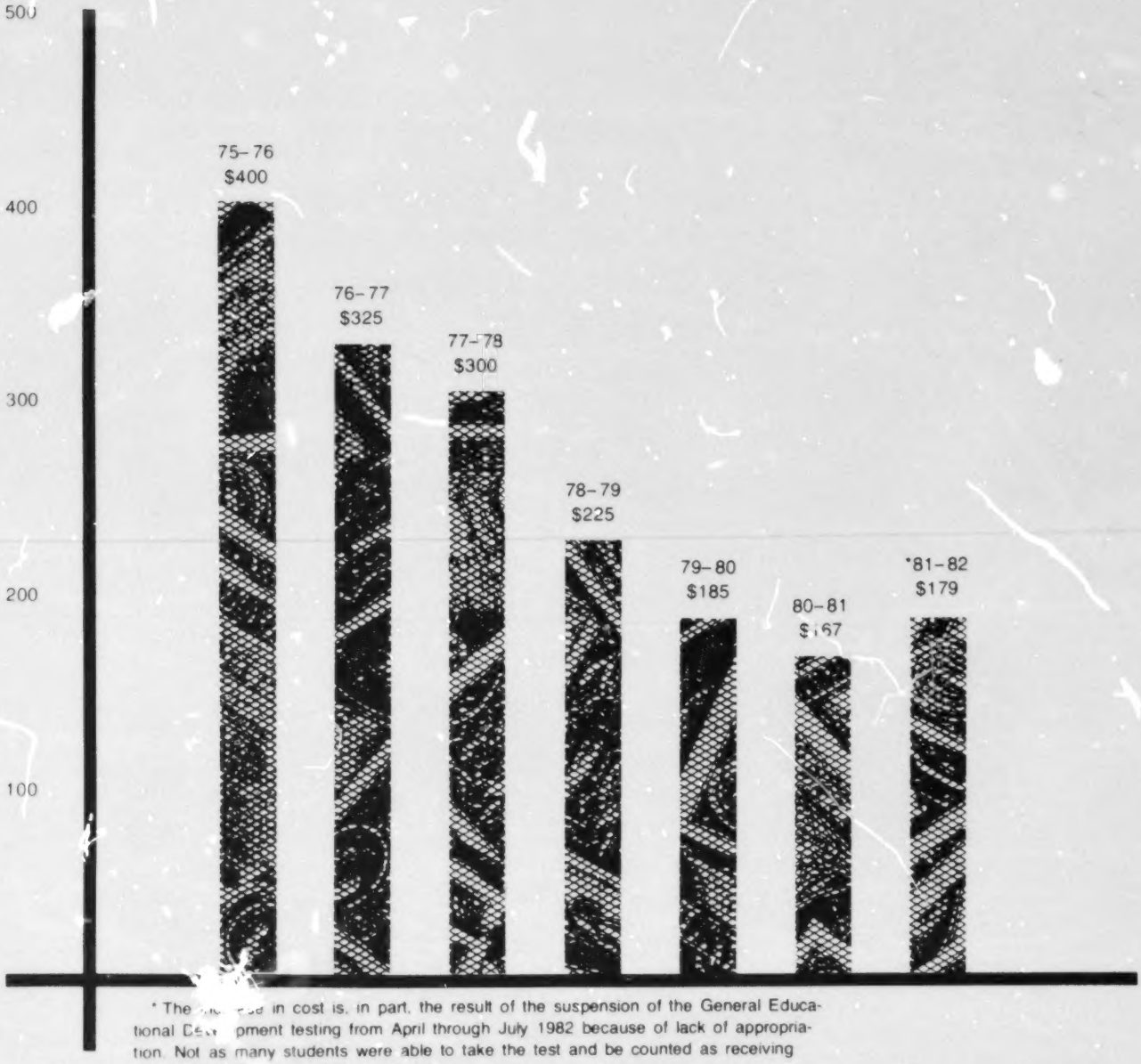


Salary increases (average)	$200
Adults who received wage increases	×7,549
Total new taxable income	$1,509,800
Taxes generated (at 18%) on $1,509,800 =	**$271,764**

Total financial impact of literacy program (1981–82)	**$17,686,064**

Cost of New York State-Funded High School Equivalency

COST PER DIPLOMA 1975–1982



* The increase in cost is, in part, the result of the suspension of the General Educational Development testing from April through July 1982 because of lack of appropriation. Not as many students were able to take the test and be counted as receiving their High School Equivalency diploma.

Current Demand for Literacy Education

Approximately 20,450 Adults are waiting to enter an Adult Literacy Program

32% of the total New York State population (18 years and older) do not have a high school diploma. (This is 4,100,000 individuals out of 12,869,227.)

Need for Growth of Literacy Program

Youth and adults age 18 or over with less than 12 years of education (1980 U.S. Census).

803,102
ENROLLED IN ADULT LITERACY EDUCATION SINCE 1970

4,100,000
ADULT
RESIDENTS OF
NEW YORK STATE
WHO NEED
ADULT LITERACY
EDUCATION

Literacy Programs Benefit Everyone